

# FRESNO—The Presidents' Council

We, the Fresno Presidents' Council, are chief executives of Fresno's anchor institutions in health care, education, agriculture, and finance.

Our institutions have the opportunity, motivation, and responsibility to address serious, long-term challenges in Fresno, and we pledge to work creatively together to generate solutions large and small.

We advocate for other agencies and the private sector to join us by acting in the long-term interests of the community.

February 26, 2014

The central San Joaquin Valley faces numerous threats to its future prosperity. Among the most serious are the concentration of poverty in urban neighborhoods, low rates of educational attainment, high rates of unemployment, poor air quality, and the continued loss of high-quality agricultural land to suburban development. The precarious finances of local agencies reflect these challenges while also further threatening the region's ability to succeed and prosper in the future.

Our industries and institutions are, by nature, rooted to this region. We will still be here in 100 years, a part of the community for as long as Fresno exists. Our futures are inextricably tied to the ability of the region to prosper and be healthy.

Our industries and institutions are engines in the local economy. Together we employ approximately 107,000 people, some 28% of the entire Fresno and Madera County workforce, who live in the Fresno region today. We consume a significant portion of the goods and services consumed in the region.

Our labor, resource, and client bases will always draw primarily on this region. Our own self-interest dictates that we protect and nurture these assets locally in order to remain viable over time. Our procurement decisions are opportunities to reinvest in the local economy with the goal of long-term stewardship of the community assets we depend on.

Our industries routinely attempt to draw new potential employees, clients, and resources to our region. The condition of all parts of our community affects the decisions of others to locate and invest in Fresno. The lack of a vibrant downtown as a focus of innovation, entrepreneurship, and culture weakens the region's long-term economic prospects — and our own — and lowers the quality of life for residents today. Even if some suburban areas offer a high quality of life, there are some talented employees we cannot retain and recruit without the presence of healthy, walkable, mixed-income urban neighborhoods and a vibrant downtown.

Anchor institutions in other communities throughout the country have successfully partnered with one another, with local government, and with other community institutions to spur catalytic community investments. Working together, these institutions have brought new life to downtowns, urban neighborhoods, and local economies.

# The Fresno Presidents' Council resolves to:

1. Support public investments in the inner city, starting with infrastructure and regulatory changes, necessary to restore Downtown Fresno as the regional center for commerce and culture.
2. Plan together and create programs, facilities, events, etc., that combine the strengths of our offerings to provide novel and needed health care, educational, financial management, and nutritional services to the community, especially in neighborhoods of greatest need, furthering our institutions' individual missions.
3. Work collaboratively with one another and with other businesses and community-based organizations to maximize the positive impact on the local economy of our institutions' buying power.
4. Explore nontraditional opportunities to invest directly in historic neighborhoods of concentrated poverty, such as by creating housing and recreational opportunities for employees that aid in recruitment and retention while contributing to neighborhood revitalization.
5. Advocate for a long-term approach to land use decisions at all levels, reflecting consciousness of the high value of food production over time as one of the primary drivers of the region's export economy, and of the connection between threats to the region's future and continued disinvestment in the existing, urbanized area of the community.
6. Collaborate with additional partners and pursue the funding and other resources necessary to achieve our objectives.

**Barry Bedwell**, President  
California Grape and Tree Fruit League

**Dr. Deborah Blue**, Chancellor  
State Center Community College District

**Tony Cantu**, President  
Fresno City College

**Jack Chubb**, CEO  
Community Regional Medical Center

**Jeff Collins**, Senior VP/Area Manager  
Kaiser Permanente

**Randy Dhindsa**, Senior VP/Market Manager  
Rabobank

**Dan Doyle**, President/CEO  
Central Valley Community Bank

**Michael Hanson**, Superintendent  
Fresno Unified School District

**Nancy Hollingsworth**, President/CEO  
Saint Agnes Medical Center

**Ryan Jacobsen**, Executive Director  
Fresno County Farm Bureau

**David Krause**, President  
Paramount Citrus

**J. Mike McGowan**, President/CEO  
Premier Valley Bank

**Dr. Pete Menjares**, President  
Fresno Pacific University

**Scott Rhodes**, Senior Vice President  
Wells Fargo

**Xavier Romano**, Director of Campus and  
Student Services - Alliant University

**Mark Riley**, Senior Vice President  
Bank of America Merrill Lynch

**Robert Smittcamp**, President/CEO  
Lyons-Magnus

**Todd Suntrapak**, President/CEO  
Children's Hospital Central California

**Mayor Ashley Swearengin**  
City of Fresno

**Richard Whitsell**, President/CEO  
Fresno First Bank

**Dennis Woods**, President/CEO  
United Security Bank

**Stuart Woolf**, President  
Woolf Farming